



# Indiana State Board of Education

Room 229, State House • Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2798  
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## MINUTES

### INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

February 4, 2009

Department of Education  
James Whitcomb Riley Conference Room  
151 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

The meeting of the Indiana State Board of Education convened at 9:09 a.m. Board members Dr. Tony Bennett, David Shane, James Edwards, Vicki Snyder, Steve Gabet, Dr. Gwendolyn Griffith-Adell, Daniel Elsener, Mike Pettibone, and Jo Blacketor were present.

#### I. Call to Order

Dr. Bennett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### II. Approval of the Minutes

Mrs. Blacketor moved for approval of the minutes as corrected. Mr. Elsener seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### III. Statement of the Chair

Dr. Bennett said he is excited about the opportunities and challenges afforded to him as the new Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Department of Education (DOE) will take action to focus on student learning. The DOE has a very clear vision that academic achievement and the career preparation of all Indiana students will be the best in the United States and in the country. Dr. Bennett said this can be done by focusing on student learning and helping schools achieve those results. The DOE is being realigned and will become a lean, streamlined organization and will have the ability to help schools attain the freedom they need to help our students become the best in the nation.

Dr. Bennett introduced the following staff members:

- Maureen Weber, Chief Operating Officer
- Lance Rhodes, Chief Financial Officer
- Dr. Rich Hogue, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services
- Marcie Brown, Chief Policy Advisor
- Jeff Zaring, State Board of Education Administrator
- Anne Brinson, Chief Information Officer
- Wes Bruce, Chief Assessment Officer
- Dr. Robert Marra, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning
- Cam Savage, Communications Director
- Neil Ruddock, Legislative Liaison

Dr. Bennett said the DOE will continue to be realigned and will continue to do the things needed to provide resources and be a model Department of Education for the country.

#### **IV. Spotlight on Learning**

Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, Director, Office of Title I, said the DOE was honoring five Indiana principals from high-performing, high-poverty schools with the state's new Spotlight on Learning Award. The recipients of the award were:

- Julie Bakehorn, George H. Fisher School 93, Indianapolis Public Schools.
- Stephen Foster, Lakeside Elementary School, MSD of Warren Township.
- R. Elizabeth Odle, Washington Irvington Elementary School #14, Indianapolis Public Schools.
- Kristie Sweeney, T.C. Steele School, #98, Indianapolis Public Schools.
- Phil Talbert, Hawthorne Elementary School, MSD of Warren Township.

Jeffery P. Zaring, State Board of Education Administrator, said the Spotlight on Learning Award has been designed to recognize outstanding contributions in support of student learning, and the award is expected to become an ongoing feature at the State Board of Education's monthly meetings.

Dr. Bennett said these principals are living examples that we do not accept excuses when we get to the school house door. He thanked the superintendents and other administrators of both Indianapolis Public Schools and Warren Township Schools for their support.

**V. Board Member Comments**

Mr. Pettibone gave Board members a copy of notes from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Power of Partnerships study group meeting he attended in January. Mr. Pettibone discussed some statistics on the national epidemic of drop outs and graduation rates and said 1.2 million students drop out of American high schools each year; 15 million children are at risk of not reaching productive adulthood; and a high school diploma does not guarantee that a student has the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, work, and life. Mr. Pettibone said if all the students in the class of 2007 had graduated they would realize an additional \$329 billion in income over their lifetimes. If our dropout rate remains unchanged for the next ten years, the result will be a loss to our nation of \$3 trillion.

Mr. Pettibone said Indiana is one of 16 states using the freshman cohort method of measuring dropout rates. While we have identified our 39 most struggling schools, (four elementary, nine middle schools, and 26 high schools), it comes down to leadership. We must continue to develop and implement a plan to support the struggling schools and sound the alarm to end the crisis.

Mr. Pettibone said he very much appreciated the opportunity to attend the NASBE study group meeting.

Mrs. Blacketor gave Board members a copy of information from the NASBE Governmental Affairs Committee meeting. Mrs. Blacketor said reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act is under way; comments heard from legislative analyst's inferred that NCLB changes are pending and probably will not happen for another year or two; and there was some discussion for the need to collaborate on a national standard and national assessment. Mrs. Blacketor said the focus of the conversation was on the stimulus package. Mrs. Blacketor was asked to lead the June 2009 Governmental Affairs Committee meeting and committed to doing so, pending the Board's approval. It was the consensus of the Board to approve this request.

Mr. Elsener gave Board members information from the National Governor's Association Forum on Enhancing Teacher Effectiveness. Mr. Elsener said experts from prestigious research universities, innovative educators, and various others shared research and experiences about the importance of teacher quality, how to improve teacher quality, and pragmatic ways to advance teaching and learning. Mr. Elsener discussed the current system and said changes need to be made regarding recruiting, compensating, and honoring the teaching profession. Mr. Elsener also said programs that have been proven, or provide great promise,

to improve teacher preparation and growth need to be created or allowed to grow, and with better resources. Mr. Elsener also discussed the need to develop better leaders within the education profession and said highly skilled and motivated individuals will not stay in a system with average or substandard teachers.

Dr. Bennett said the DOE is going to continue to invest in executive leadership. Great teaching should be upheld by great principals, and poor teaching should be addressed by great principals.

**VI. Adjudications and Hearings**

- A. Mr. Zaring presented oral argument in Cause Number 0709016-A, R.K. and the Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation, Transfer Tuition Request based on Academic Aspiration, Academic Honor Diploma, and Medical Reasons.
- B. Mr. Zaring presented oral argument in Cause Number 0709016-B, J.K. and the Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation, Transfer Tuition Reimbursement based on Crowded Conditions.

Mrs. Krueger spoke on behalf of R.K. and J.K. Michelle Cooper, Bose, McKinney, and Evans LLP, spoke on behalf of Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation.

Mr. Pettibone made a motion to uphold the decision of the hearing officer. Dr. Griffith-Adell seconded the motion. The motion passed with eight ayes and one no (Mrs. Blacketer).

- C. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of certification of amendments to the governing body selection plan for the Whitko Community School Corporation.

Mr. Shane moved for approval. Mr. Pettibone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VII. Public Comments**

**VIII. Committee Reports**

Dr. Bennett discussed strategic planning and said the DOE is working on deregulation issues that will allow our schools to operate in the best

interest of the communities and children that they serve. Dr. Bennett also said the strategic plan will be aggressive, have focus, and will have pillars that allow the Department to help schools as a resource, to operate better for our children.

**IX. Discussion**

Mr. Zaring noted that Board members received a written assessment and accountability update. There were no questions.

Dr. Bennett said he appeared before the House Education Committee on a bill regarding classroom discipline and the ability of our teachers to maintain an orderly environment in their classrooms without fear. Dr. Bennett also said the need is great for the General Assembly to grant teachers qualified immunity, and if a teacher does feel it is important to remove a student from their classroom, the student cannot go back to the classroom until the principal arranges a meeting with the parent, the student, and the principal. This would also serve as a mechanism to get parents into the school and to become partners in disciplinary and educational issues.

Dr. Bennett also discussed the issue of national background checks for teachers as well as the obligation of schools to report certain aspects of teacher misconduct when final action is taken by the local school board.

Dr. Bennett discussed sending dollars to the classroom and how we can help drive dollars to the classroom.

Mr. Zaring said an electronic version of bills in the General Assembly and their current status was sent to Board members.

**X. Action**

- A. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of the students with disabilities child count.

Mr. Gabet moved for approval. Mr. Elsener seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of Freeway School petition from Christian Academy of Madison.

Mr. Edwards moved for approval, with five year accreditation. Mr. Elsener seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of flexibility in selection of instructional materials.

Mrs. Blacketor moved for approval. Mr. Gabet seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of blanket waivers and initiation of rulemaking process to facilitate student-centered learning.

Mr. Shane moved for approval. Mrs. Blacketor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- E. Mr. Zaring presented a request for permission to accept petitions for advancements from the Common School Fund.

Mr. Shane moved for approval. Mr. Gabet seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **XII. Board Operations**

Mrs. Blacketor asked for information regarding high school diplomas issued by Ivy Tech.

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Mr. Gabet moved for adjournment. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.